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IMPORTANCE OF REVIEW LITERATURE.

Besides the hundreds of general medical journals in which original papers upon ophthalmic subjects appear from time to time, there are thirty-six special journals devoted largely or entirely to ophthalmology. It is throughout this broad expanse of literature that articles relating to ophthalmology originally appear. The reader of any one ophthalmic journal cannot hope to find in its pages one-twentieth of the important original papers. Even from the reading of three journals, representing different countries and carefully selected, not one-seventh of the original articles of current literature can be gleaned. To keep abreast of that literature it is absolutely essential to read reviews and abstracts for the other six-sevenths.

It is not assumed that even the best-informed and most conscientious ophthalmologist will read all current literature, even in abstract. But it is important, when one wishes to study a particular subject, that he should in some way have at his command the best and latest papers bearing upon that subject. To afford such facilities for study, review literature is absolutely essential.

This has been understood for many years by the thorough students of Europe. To say nothing of Nagel's Jahresbericht, the thorough way in which even the smaller ophthalmic journals—like Hirschberg's Centralblatt or the Revue Générale d'Ophtalmologie—cover the field of the world's literature is only beginning to be imitated in the review departments of ophthalmic journals published in English. With only three or four exceptions, the ophthalmic journals of continental Europe make serious effort to bring to their readers a systematic account of current ophthalmic literature.

In our own journals the review department has too often been merely the receptacle for a few articles that happened to strike the editor's fancy; or was used as something to fill up the journal to a respectable size, when original contributions became scarce. Or, if it were made systematic, it has been

allowed to fall behind current publications, often dealing with those two or three, or even more, years old.

The review department should be taken more seriously. If space is not given to it for a complete survey of current literature, it should at least be systematic, and the articles carefully selected from the whole field they purport to cover. This field may be the literature of the world; or it may be limited to the literature of our own country; or to that of French and German publications. But what literature it does purport to review should be thoroughly and systematically sifted for the articles selected as most important.

If we may criticize a Year Book for requiring six or eight months to prepare and publish, after the appearance of the last literature with which it deals, surely a monthly or quarterly journal that is two or three years late in its review department is open to very serious criticism.

THE DECEMBER NUMBER.

The next number of OPHTHALMIC LITERATURE will contain the indexes for the first volume, and to make them complete, its issue may be slightly delayed. In this connection we are glad to note that thus far each number has been mailed to the subscribers within ten days of the close of the month, the literature of which was indexed. The final number will also contain a list of the important books of the year. In a journal of this size it is impossible to review all that appear, but we can indicate where the best reviews of them are to be found in journals published in the English language.

IMPORTANT PAPERS.

The ocular symptoms of tumors of the hypophysis, together with the results thus far obtained from operative treatment of such cases, are reviewed by De Kleijn, who emphasizes the vagueness of our knowledge of the subject. The present position of investigations and controversy concerning the so-called trachoma bodies is discussed by Greeff, whose article appears both in Italian and in an English translation. Scherer presents his conclusions and recommendations as to the requirements for visual acuity and refraction of infantry. Together with an account of a personal case of posterior lenticonus of which she was able to make an anatomic study, Gourfein-Welt offers a careful review of the literature pertaining to this condition.

BOOK NOTICES.

H. V. Würdemann. Injuries of the Eye. 8vo. 926 pages, with 375 illustrations and 24 colored plates. Chicago: Cleveland Press. Price, cloth, $7.00.

A book upon a particular subject may conform to either of two general plans. If of limited size, it may be restricted within definite boundaries in order that its special field may be thoroughly covered. Where the subject leads beyond the boundaries assigned, the reader must refer to books of similar character dealing with the related subjects. The other plan, which it is possible to follow in larger works, is to fully consider any and all related subjects, from the point of view of their relations to the main subject of the work.

The book under consideration belongs in the latter class. Ophthalmic diagnosis might be the subject of a separate work, but anything about diagnosis which can be applied to cases of ocular injury is considered by its author as properly within the scope of this treatise.

Following the plan indicated, Dr. Würdemann has given us the most extended book upon its subject; and, comparing it with its nearest rival, that of Praun, published in German, it shows its greatest superiority in the free use of illustrations.

In a work of this scope the method of classification of its material is of importance. This book is divided into three main parts. The first part, general in character, includes seventeen chapters, discussing: Types of Injury, Etiology, Mechanism, Complications, Operative and Birth Injuries, Diagnosis, Prophylaxis, Conservative and Radical Methods of Treatment, etc. In the second part the injuries of particular tissues and structures are considered, as those of conjunctiva, cornea, optic nerve, or orbit. This part includes thirteen chapters. The third part, headed Forensic Medicine, has chapters on Medico-legal Aspects, Protective Legislation, Pensions and Accident Insurance, and Visual Economics.

This book brings together the results of a large amount of practical experience; both that of its author and the recorded experience of the profession in general. To each section is appended an important bibliography of its subject. It also illustrates the very wide range of influence that ocular injuries may exert.

It is rather defaced by the display headings at the beginnings of the chapters. Some of these occupy a whole page; but, being devoid of page references, serve very imperfectly

the purpose of a table of contents. An error which ought not to have been perpetuated is that of describing the circumcorneal illumination seen in diaphanoscopy as connected with the circumlental space.

Each case of injury to the eye differs somewhat from every other case that has been encountered. The best preparation to deal with such injuries is obtained by thoughtful study of many cases of the same general character. Not only are they to be studied clinically, but also as other surgeons have seen them and placed them on record in the literature. For this sort of study of the subject Dr. Würdemann's treatise offers better facilities than have ever before been available.

The Ophthalmic Year Book, Volume VIII. Edited by Edward Jackson, T. B. Schneideman, and William Zentmayer. 8vo. 455 pages, with 31 illustrations. Denver: Herrick Book and Stationery Company. Price, $5.00.

This volume is larger than any of its predecessors, containing about two and one-third times the amount of matter in Volume I of the series. Its references to journal articles number almost three thousand, against less than one thousand in the first volume.

It is interesting to note the relative literary output of different nations, as indicated by the language in which the papers referred to were originally published.

The following table shows in the second column the number of papers published in each of the principal European languages; and the last column, the number of journals in that language devoted wholly or chiefly to ophthalmology:

English	1,191	9
German	940	8
French	506	7
Italian	85	6
Spanish	50	2
Other languages	165	4

The other languages include Dutch, Russian, Hungarian, Scandinavian, and Japanese. Of the journals published in English, two are published in Great Britain, and seven in the United States. The papers credited to English include some originally written in other languages, and translated into English. To this and to a more complete command of English medical journals must be ascribed most of the apparent preponderance of English over German.

Aside from the large number of papers relating to ophthalmology that still appear in general medical journals, the thirty-

six special journals above referred to indicate how small a proportion of important articles come in their original form to the attention of the readers of any one journal.

Of course, in the present volume the recorded experience of Ehrlich's new specific treatment for syphilis is an important topic. But some of the older subjects, like ocular tuberculosis, or the newer operations for glaucoma, continue to claim much attention. Indeed, from a general review of this publication one is struck with the fact that in a year's literature nearly all topics receive attention, claiming about the usual proportion of space.

Index of Ophthalmology.

DIAGNOSIS.

Black, H. M. The Acutometer. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 744.

Borchardt, B. Aron's Chromoscope. Woch. f. Therap. u. Hyg. d. Auges, No. 45.

Dixon, T. Value of Eye in Pathologic Conditions. N. Y. State Jour. Med. Oct. 11.

Emmert. Designations of the Meridians of the Visual Fields. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 511.

Perlia, R. A Simple Stereoscopometer. Ibid. p. 492.

Abstract. **Evans.** (Page 134) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 776. **Harman.** (Page 119) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1177. **Heilbrun.** (Page 75) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 795.

THERAPEUTICS.

Chalupecky. Action of Radium on Eyes. Centralbl. f. p. Augenh. Oct. p. 304.

Harry, P. A. Chloretone in Diseases of Eye. Prescriber, Oct. p. 245.

Koszutski. Radium for Ocular Disease. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 520.

Orth. Action of Dionin on Eye. Woch. f. Therap. u. Hyg. d. Auges, July 27. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 804.

Scopolamin-Morphine Narcosis in Eye Operations. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 507.

Theobald, S. Against Indiscriminate Use of Organic Compounds of Silver in Ophthalmic Practice. Bull. of Johns Hopkins Hosp. Nov. p. 407.

Abstract. **Mitchell.** (Page 119) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1176.

REFRACTION.

Beykowsky. Fitness for Military Service of Astigmatics. Centralbl. f. p. Augenh. Oct. p. 320.

Bogatsch. Inheritance of Myopia. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 431.

Bogdan. School Myopia in Budapest. Lancet, ii, p. 1305.

Bradley, T. E. Errors of Refraction. Jour. of Med. Assn. of Ga. Sept. p. 50.

Cady, W. G. Color Dispersion in Astigmatic Eye. Science, xxxiii, p. 26.

Cummins, H. B. General Practitioner and Refraction. Neb. Med. Outlook, Nov. p. 18.

Majewski. A New Refractometer. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 525.

Soger. Statistics of School Myopia. Zeitschr. f. Schulgsndhspflg. xxiv, p. 334.

Oppenheimer. Three-glass Spectacles. Woch. f. Therap. u. Hyg. d. Auges, No. 44.

Vandegrift, G. W. Surgery of Myopia. New York Med. Jour. Nov. 25, p. 1057.

Wölfflin, E. Temporary Decrease of Refraction in Diabetes Mellitus. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct p. 426.

Abstract. **Scherer.** (Page 135) Zeitschr. f. Augenh. xxvi, p. 336.

OCULAR MOVEMENTS.

Bartels, M. and **Ziba, S.** Regulation of Position of Eyes through the Aural Apparatus. Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 207.

Blanco, T. Operation for Shortening Muscle for Strabismus. Arch. de Oftalm. Hisp.-Amer. xi, p. 57.

Buys. Clinical Application of Nystagmography. Jour. Méd. de Bruxelles, No. 39.

Ginestous and **Mangon.** Syphilitic Congenital Paralysis of Oculo-motor Nerve. Gaz. hebd. d. Sc. Méd. de Bordeaux, xxxii, p. 233.

Kallmann. Caloric Nystagmus. Berlin Thesis.

Meek, J. A. Defects of Co-ordination of Ocular Muscles. Yale Med. Jour. Oct. p. 53.

Paganelli, T. R. New Tenotomy Scissors. Jour. Med. Soc. New Jersey, Nov. p. 307.

Pfingst, A. O. New Operation for Advancement of Ocular Muscles. Ky. Med. Jour. Sept. 15, p. 813.

Pigeon, L. A Sliding Stereoscope. Compt. rend. Acad. d. Sc. ciii, p. 1111.

Pipenberg. Termination of Ocular Muscle Palsies. Leipsic Thesis.

Ryerson, G. S. Headaches and Heterophoria. Dom. Med. Mo. Oct. p. 109.

Weiss, O. Eye Movements and Lid Movements. Zeitschr. f. Sinnesphysiol. xlv, Pts. 5 and 6.

Wirths, M. Ocular Palsies and Vestibular and Optic Nystagmus. (Bibl.) Zeitschr. f. Augenh. xxvi, p. 318.

Worth, C. Convergent Squint and Heterophoria. (Dis.) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1166.

Abstract. **Lenoble** and **Aubineau.** Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 802.

CONJUNCTIVA.

Abanese, N. Epithelial Inclusions of Normal and Inflamed Conjunctiva. Ann. d'Oculist. cxlvi, p. 243.

Amsler, C. Croupous Conjunctivitis. Basle Thesis.

Botteri, A. Cell Inclusions in Spring Catarrh. Wiener Kl. Woch. xxiv, Oct. 12.

Foldt, A. Prophylaxis of Blennorrhea Neonatorum. Ibid. p. 980.

Frommholz. Prophylaxis of Ophthalmia Neonatorum. Med. Klin. vii, No. 40.

Greeff, R. Questions of Trachoma Corpuscles. La Clin. Ocul. xii, p. 729.

Grönholm, V. and Heiberg, K. A. Finsen Light and Trachoma. Lancet, ii, p. 1212.

Hofstätter, R. Ophthalmoblennorrhea Neonatorum. Gyn. Rund. v, p. 411.

Leoz Ortin, G. The Spirochete of Schaudinn in Ophthalmology. Arch. de Oftalm. Hisp.-Amer. xi, p. 70.

Little, A. H. Ophthalmia Neonatorum. Jour. Maine Med. Assn. Oct. p. 440.

Löhlein. Epithelial Inclusion in Trachoma and Ophthalmia Neonatorum. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 516.

McGowan, J. P. and Taylor, W. M. Epidemic Conjunctivitis with Gram-positive Diplococcus Not Pneumococcus. Lancet, ii, p. 1324.

Meyerhof, M. Repeated Infections with Trachoma. Centralbl. f. Augenh. Oct. pp. 295, 318.

Porges, S. Trachoma Epidemic in Factory. Amtsarzt. Leip. und Wien, iii, p. 201.

Reis. Pigmentation of Palpebral Conjunctiva. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 522.

Rosenhauch, Kramsztyk and Wicherkiewicz. Trachoma. (Dis.) Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 518.

Safford, M. V. Trachoma. Med. Rec. Nov. 11, p. 968.

Sava-Coiu, G. Superimposed Infections in Trachoma. Bull. Soc. de Méd. et Nat. de Jassy, xxv, p. 43.

Tchirkowski, W. Influenza Bacillus in Pathology of Eye Diseases. (Bibl.) Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 467.

Verderame, F. Ocular Infections by Bacillus Pyocyaneus. (Bibl.) Arch. di Ottal. xix, p. 195.

Verwey, A. Conjunctival Tuberculosis Simulating Parinaud's Conjunctivitis. Nederl. Tijds. v. Geneesk. ii, p. 12.

Abstract. **Bartels.** (Page 87) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 337. **De Mets.** (Page 76) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 804. **Greeff.** (Page 120) Ibid. p. 756. **Mohr and Baumm.** (Page 88) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 341. **Pagenstecher and Wissmann.** (Page 62) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 793.

CORNEA AND SCLERA.

Bednarski. Phlyctenular Kerato-conjunctivitis in Children. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 521.

Brav, A. Interstitial Keratitis Treated by Tuberculin. Therap. Gaz. Nov. p. 777.

Elschnig, A. Treatment of Eczematous Corneal Ulcer. Klin. Therap. Woch. xxviii, p. 709.

Heilbrun, C. Aspergillus Keratitis: Experimental Study of Deutschmann's Serum. (Bibl.) Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 444.

Krutovski, V. M. Pyocyanase in Serpigenous Ulcer. Sibirsk. Vrach. Gaz. Irkutsk, iv, p. 109.

Lundsgaard, K. K. K. Entoptic Study of Keratitis. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 531.

Metafume, E. Epithelial Inclusions in Normal and Pathologic Cornea. Ann. d'Oculist. cxlvi, p. 251.

Miyashita, S. Pneumococcus Keratitis. Arch. f. Vergleich. Ophth. ii, Pt. 2.

Rochat. Mooren's Ulcer of Cornea. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 527.

Rohmer. Congenital Corneal Opacity. Rev. Méd. de l'Est, xliii, p. 359.

Uribe y Troncoso. Epithelial Dystrophy of Cornea. Anales de Oftal. xiv, p. 133.

Abstract. **Fuchs.** (Page 7) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 343. **Godéchoux.** (Page 122) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 804. **Kaz.** (Page 49) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 343. **Pagenstecher.** (Page 63) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 793. **Tertsch.** (Page 107) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 342.

ANTERIOR CHAMBER AND PUPIL.

Cosmettatos, G. F. Development of Iris in Formation of Anterior Chamber in Man. Arch. d'Opht. xxxi, p. 655.

Fuchs, W. Pupils in Dementia Precox. Psych. Neur. Zeit. No. 18.

Kuhlefelt. Instability of Pupil with Anterior Synechiae. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 533.

Manouélian, Y. Bactericidal Action of Aqueous to Anthrax Bacteria. Ann. de l'Institut Pasteur, Sept. p. 669.

Antibodies in Aqueous of Immunized Animals. Ibid. p. 661.

Morax, V. and Loiseau, G. Passage of Antitoxins into Aqueous. Ann. de l'Institut Pasteur, Sept. p. 647.

UVEAL TRACT.

Arnold, P. Changes in Surface of Iris at Position of Ocular Cleft. (Bibl.) Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 451.

Bach. Etiology of Uveal Inflammations. Ibid. p. 515.

Harman, N. B. Acute Iritis. Lancet, ii, p. 1247.

Henderson, T. Comparative Anatomy of Ciliary Region. Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1169.

Ivanoff, Z. Puncture of Anterior Chamber for Diagnosis of Iris Tuberculosis. Geneva Thesis.

Koster, W. Atropin Sulfate in Irido-cyclitis. Nederl. Tijds. v. Geneesk. i, p. 2211.

Lang, W. Treatment of Iritis by Vaccines. Arch. Middlesex Hosp. xxii, p. 1.

SYMPATHETIC DISEASE.

Derby, G. S. Use of Serum in Sympathetic Disease. Arch. of Ophth. xl, p. 593.

Stock, W. Benzosalin in Sympathetic Ophthalmia. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 483.

GLAUCOMA.

Axenfeld, T. Hydrophthalmos and the Influence of Chloroform Narcosis on Intraocular Tension. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 503.

Bentzen, C. F. Sclerectomy of Lagrange and Holth. Ibid. p. 530.

Fejer, J. Infantile Hydrophthalmos. Berl. Klin. Woch. Oct. 16, p. 1886.

Gilbert, W. Venesection (Dyes' Method) in Glaucoma. Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 238.

Grönholm, V. Influence of Pupil Width, Accommodation and Convergence on Intraocular Tension. (Bibl.) Arch. of Ophth. xl, p. 617.

Harman, N. B. Conjunctival Incisions in Herbert's Sclerectomy. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 768.

Improved Twin Scissors for Sclerectomy. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 775. Lancet, ii, p. 1207.

Heerfordt, C. F. Glaucoma after Dislocation of Lens. Hospitalstidende, liv, Oct. 11.

Herbert, H. "Small Flap" Sclerectomy in Glaucoma. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 762.

Jaboulay, M. Effect on Eye of Excision of Gasserian Ganglion. Lyon Méd. cxvii, Oct. 8.

Kleczkowski, T. Adrenalin in Blood Serum of Glaucoma Patients. (Bibl.) Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 417.

Mauch, O. Sclerotomy in Infantile Glaucoma. Schweiz. Aerztl. Mitt. a. d. Univ.-Inst. Zürich, p. 179.

Noizewski. Simple Glaucoma. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 534.

Rochat. Curative Action of Iridectomy in Glaucoma. Ibid. p. 527.

Smith, P. Operative Treatment of Glaucoma. (Dis.) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1158.

Stephenson, S. Acute Glaucoma Successfully Treated by Trephining the Sclera. Lancet, ii, p. 1136.

Intumescent Cataract Leading to Absolute Glaucoma. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 772.

Treatment of Glaucoma. Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1214.

Walker, A. W. Sclero-corneal Trephining for Glaucoma. Liverpool Med.-Chir. Jour. July.

Witalinski. Glaucoma after Cataract Operation. (Dis.) Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 522.

Abstract. **Bettremieux.** (Page 108) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 329. **Clegg.** (Page 108) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1162. **Coppez.** (Page 108) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 329. **Elliot.** (Page 108) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1160. **Lagrange.** (Page 108) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 329.

LENS.

Bergmeister, R. Double Congenital Cataract with Congenital Anomalies of Skull. Beit. z. Augenh. lxxix. Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 333.

Brown, W. M. Success in Cataract Operations. Canada Lancet, Nov. p. 192.

Burkhard, H. Reclination of Hard Cataract. Leipsic Thesis.

Calhoun, F. P. Association of Uncinariasis with Cataracts. Jour. Med. Assn. of Ga. Aug. p. 11.

Cauvin, C. Spontaneous Resorption of Senile and Traumatic Cataracts. (Bibl.) Arch. d'Opht. xxxi, p. 683

Ewing, A. E. Broad Keratome in Removal of Dislocated Lens. Jour. Ophth. and Oto-Laryngol. v, p. 341.

Gourfein-Welt, L. Posterior Lenticonus. (Bibl.) Arch. d'Opht. xxxi, p. 625.

Grandclément. Pathogenesis and Treatment of Cataract. Lyon Méd. cxvi, p. 926.

Howe, L. Crystalline Lens as Figured in Text-books and as Seen in Eye. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 770.

Kahler, K. Pathologic Anatomy of Lens. Marburg Thesis.

Kuhnt. Operative Treatment of Lamellar Cataract. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 515.

Washing Out Lens Capsule in Cataract Operation. Ibid. p. 514.

Lauder, E. Cataract from Concussion. Cleveland Med. Jour. Oct. p. 850.

Mihail, D. Anatomic Pathologic Condition of Posterior Capsule in Senile Cataract. Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 365.

Pagenstecher (Strasburg). Congenital Cataract and Malformation of Eye in Guinea Pigs. Münch. Med. Woch. No. 32.

Sattler, R. Intracapsular Extraction of Cataractous Lens. Arch. of Ophth. xl, p. 577.

Vail, D. T. Smith's Cataract Operation. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 809.

Abstract. **Nesfield.** (Page 140) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 331. **Sheppard.** (Page 124) Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 4, p. 1171. **Taylor.** (Page 109) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 333. **Van Lint.** (Page 92) Ibid. p. 340.

RETINA.

De Kleijn. Studies in Diseases of Optic Nerve and Retina (Visual Fields). Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 307.

Dolganoff, W. Pregnancy as Cause of Disease of Optic Nerve and Retina. Deutsche Med. Woch. xxxvii, p. 1893. Jour. Amer. Med. Assn. Nov. 18, p. 1730.

Fejer, J. Traumatic Retinal Detachment. Berl. Klin. Woch. Oct. 16, p. 1886.

Fujita, H. Pigment Movements and Cone Contraction in Darkened Eyes of Frogs. Arch. f. Vergleich. Ophth. ii, Pt. 2, p. 164. Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 792.

Gahlen, F. Entoptic Observations in Chorio-retinitis. Verhandl. d. Phys. Med. Gesell. xli, p. 99.

Hirschberg. Spontaneous Healing Retinal Detachment. Centralbl. f. p. Augenh. Oct. p. 299.

Krusius. Treatment of Retinal Detachment by Injections of Air into Vitreous. Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 395.

Lagrange. Uremic Amaurosis in Pregnant Woman. Arch. d'Opht. xxxi, p. 675.

Pöllot, W. Atypical Hereditary Chorio-retinitis Pigmentosa. (Bibl.) Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 379.

Schaub, A. Intensity of Images. Amer. Jour. Psychol. xxii, p. 346.

Sivén, O. The Rods as the Color-perceiving Organ. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 531.

Vainshtein, A. S. Retinitis Pigmentosa and Glaucoma. Viestnik Ophth. xxviii, p. 149.

Zeeman, W. P. C. Hole and Cyst Formation in Fovea. Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 259.
Abstract. **Lutz.** (Page 93) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 339.

TOXIC AMBLYOPIA.

Garcia del Mazo. Blindness from Atoxyl. Rev. de Med. y Cirug. práct. xci, p. 121.
Valude, E. Ocular and Auditory Trouble Following Use of Hectin. Ann. d'Oculist. cxlvi, p. 272.

OPTIC NERVE.

Deyl, J. Development of Optic Nerve and Chiasm. Centralbl. f. p. Augenh. Oct. p. 302.
Holden, W. A. Acute Disseminated Myelitis with Retrobulbar Degeneration of Optic Nerves. Arch. of Ophth. xl, p. 569.
Windbiel, J. New Theory of Origin of Papillitis. Albany Med. Annals, Oct. p. 606.
Abstract. **Frenkel.** (Page 142) Ophthalmoscope, ix, p. 804.

TRACTS AND CENTERS.

Camus, P. Visual Hallucinations and Hemianopsia. L'Encéphale, vi, p. 521.
De Kleijn, A. Ophthalmologic Symptoms of Tumor of Hypophysis. Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 307.
Lohman. Visual Disturbance of Hemianopsia. Ibid. p. 270.

EYEBALL.

Dolganoff, V. Spontaneous Rupture of Eyeball. Prakt. Vrach. x, p. 331.
Grunér. Intraocular Disinfection. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 532.
Robinson, W. Removal of Eyeball; Quick and Easy Method. Brit. Med. Jour. Nov. 11, p. 1249.
Silfvast. Immunizing Vaccine against Staphylococcus Infection of Eyes. Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenh. Oct. p. 533.
Von Szily. Cell Degeneration in Embryonal Eyes. Ibid. p. 513.
Wahlfors. Abscission of Eyeball. Ibid. p. 532.
Abstract. **Mende.** (Page 94) Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 338.

ANOMALIES.

Rössler, F. Atypical Iris Coloboma and Other Malformations of Eyes. (Bibl.) Graefe's Arch. f. Ophth. lxxx, p. 296.

LACRIMAL APPARATUS.

Castresana, B. Lacrimal Fistula a Cause of Death. Arch. de Oftal. Hisp.-Amer. xi, p. 61.
Dewatripont. Bacteriologic Relation between Nasal and Lacrimal Affections. La Clinique, xliii, Oct. 28.
Fage. Dacryocystitis of New Born. Arch. d'Opht. xxxi, p. 650.
Hannes, B. Plasma Cells in Lacrimal Gland. Virchow's Arch. Pt. 3.
Harman, N. B. Epiphora after Excision of Lacrimal Sac. Ophth. Rev. xxx, p. 325.
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